



## Navigating Young People's Online Behaviour: Human Connections in the Digital Age

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**This presentation is the result of:**

- **Working extensively with “Gen Y” students**
- **Research on online behaviour of young people**
- **Many conversations with academics and teachers**
- **Years of running training workshops for academics and teachers**

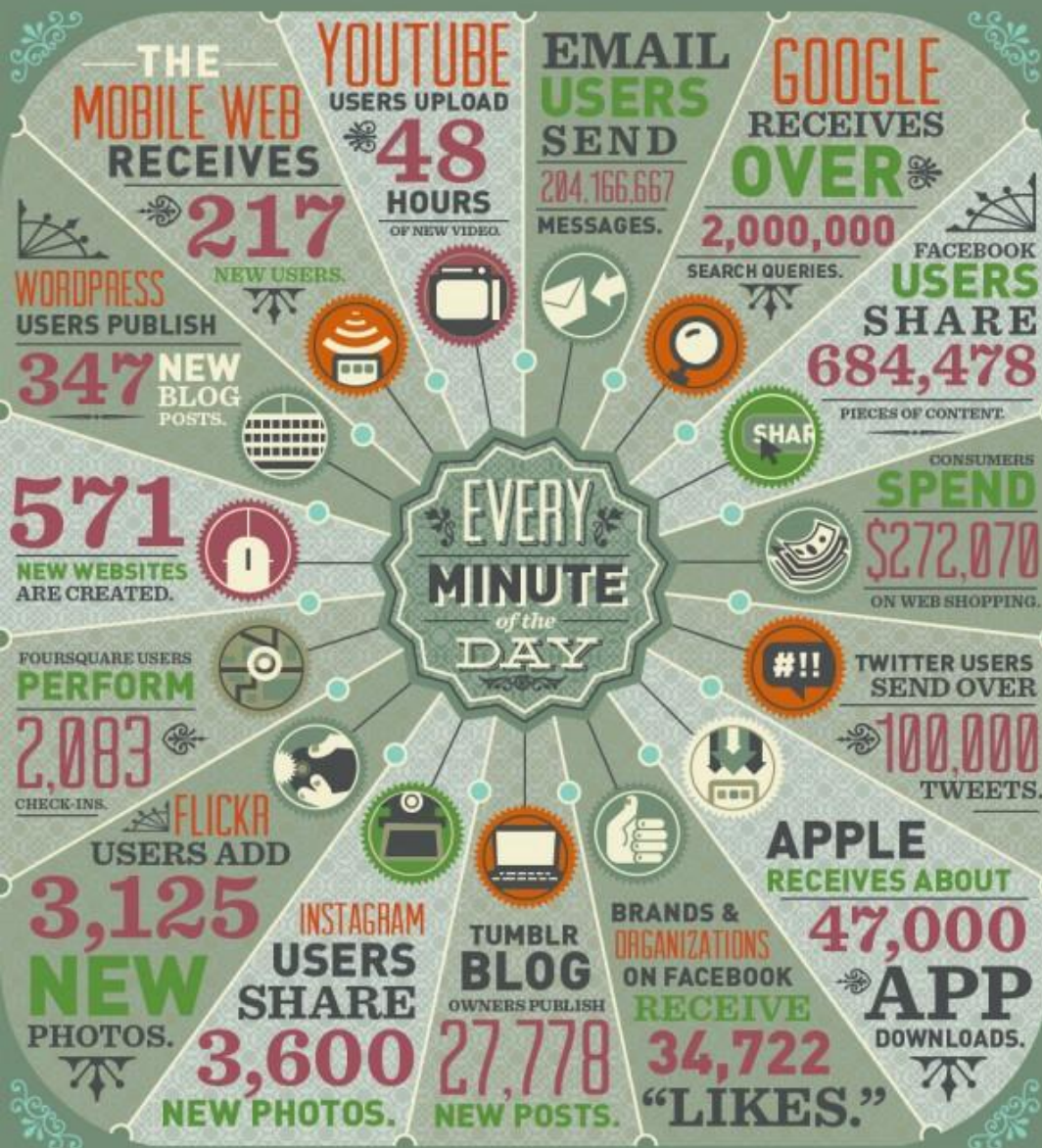
*“Students want everything for very little effort these days”*

*“When are these students going to realise they actually have to work for results?”*

*“Parents expect us to fix their children’s problem when it comes to cyberspace”*

*“How can we possibly keep up?”*

# How is the World Changing?



Dunbar's Number  
(the suggested cognitive limit to the number of people we can maintain stable social relationships with)

# 150

WITH NO SIGNS OF SLOWING, THE DATA KEEPS GROWING

These are just some of the more common ways that Internet users add to the big data pool. In truth, depending on the niche of business you're in, there are virtually countless other sources of relevant data to pay attention to. Consider the following:

The global Internet population grew 6.59 percent from 2010 to 2011 and now represents

2.1 BILLION PEOPLE



- **Word of mouth is conveyed by the internet and is instant**

- GEN Y students are more likely to tell it like it is

- Internet environments:

Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest, You Tube, Snapchat, Bebo, Face Book, Skype, other Social Networking sites, Linked In and other career sites, Gaming sites, Instant Messengers, other Mobile APPS!

What is Web 2.0? It's not just about the technology... it's about how people use the technology. **Web 2.0 is about social networking and interaction**

- **Sometimes ...** Institutions' environments:

Field Trips, School Camps, Emails, Brochures, Websites, Learning Management Systems, Smart Boards



## If there is so much information out there, why aren't we more educated or informed as a society?

Recognised and Demanded Information Needs	Recognised and Undemanded Information Needs
Unrecognised and Demanded Information Needs	Unrecognised and Undemanded Information Needs

Alzougool, Chang and Gray (2013)



**But how do they access this information even when they do get to our sites?**

Extensive Research Low Reading	Extensive Research High Reading
Basic Research Low Reading	Basic Research Low Reading

Pang, Verspoor, Chang, and Pearce (2014)



Online Participant Role		Example SNS Features
Reader / Member	Lurkers	Entry and exit, View, Browse, Search
	Likers	
Contributor	Linkers	Rate, Tag, Review, Post, Upload
Collaborator	Leaders	Establishing relationships, Cooperating, Collaborating, Communicating
Leader		Promoting, Mentoring, Governing

Table 1: Site features according to role (adapted from Preece and Shneiderman, 2009)





- Too much internet is bad and making young people vulnerable
- Young people don't understand privacy
- Young people all around the world are becoming more similar culturally
- Young people are disconnected

**Let's challenge some of these views...**





- Why do I have to study this subject?
- Why do I have to study this subject **THIS** way?
- Can we do this subject **ANOTHER** way?
- Do I really have to do this? Why?
- Can I do something more interesting with my time?
- I'm **BORED**
- Can we vote someone off the island?





- What do my friends say? What do my internet friends say?
- What does Google and Wikipedia say?
- I don't need to see strangers if I can talk to friends back home about this.
- Do I really need these services?





- Online Behaviour is still not fully understood
- Early Indications include:
  - Willingness to divulge personal information
  - Willingness to use and engage in new online sites
  - Sustainability is questionable (once bored, they move on)
- Downloading and Uploading is a normal part of life
- Chatting online is a part of life
- Accessing information ASAP is a part of life
- Online 24-7?
- International differences in terms of online behaviour



## Some Key Characteristics of Online Social Networking (OSN) include;

### Time is of the Essence

- Real-time Interactions
- Instantaneous Interactions

### It is Social

- One to Many, Many to One, Many to Many

### It is “Democratic”

- Anyone could theoretically have a voice
- Anyone can share information
- Anyone can watch
- Boundaries are self-defined



Boundaries are:

- artificial, by and large
- are easily breached
- about personal discipline and choice and preference

self-created and regulated



The Clock Tower, University of Melbourne



## So... what should be done?

- Gauge and survey your students' expectations
- In your discussions with them, remember to gauge their use of technology and the internet, it's a way of life... not just a gadget
- Always talk about RELEVANCE... answer the WHY questions
- Use the most important resource you have, your students (they understand what their peers need), and have very constructive and useful dialogues with the students and student leaders. Focus on responsible citizenship. Harness their creativity.
- But remember not all students will fall into the tech and internet savvy Gen Y grouping. There are still big discrepancies in access to technology around the world.



### What mindset shifts might be required...

- > The boundary or work/school life and home/social life is blurred and shifting all the time
- > The role of the teacher as the 'provider of content' is shifting to one where the teacher might be seen as 'the arbiter of good content'?
- > The teacher learning from the student... when the knowledge and experience gap is getting wider
- > Control is difficult if not impossible...
- > The worry of most institutions: How do we deal with negativity online?